Conference Group for Central European History of the American Historical Association

Review
Reviewed Work(s): Das Dienstfräulein auf dem Bahnhof. Frauen im öffentlichen Raum im Blick der Berliner Bahnhofsmission 1894—1939 by Astrid Mignon Kirchhof
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Source: *Central European History*, Vol. 45, No. 3 (SEPTEMBER 2012), pp. 567-569
Published by: Cambridge University Press on behalf of Conference Group for Central European History of the American Historical Association
Stable URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/23270526
Accessed: 21-05-2018 12:23 UTC

regularly appeared on the pages of satirical magazines such as *Kladderadatsch* and *Fliegende Blätter* from the 1880s onward had already become standardized long before this process took place in consumer imagery. Ciarlo also makes a couple of false assertions, such as in the conclusion where he speculates on the impact on constructions of blackness of an increased black presence in post-World War I Germany. Here he suggests that the Weimar period saw an increased migration of Africans from Germany's colonies. This was not the case; instead the Great War brought an end to this migration flow. Additionally, the book's lack of a bibliography is somewhat irritating. These, however, are minor quibbles. *Advertising Empire* is a very impressive and creative study as well as a compelling read. Not only does it underline the value in employing visual history as a means of historical research, but Ciarlo has much to say about the complex relationship between consumer society and colonialism as well as the construction and articulation of race in Imperial Germany.

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doi:10.1017/S0008938912000416

Das Dienstfräulein auf dem Bahnhof. Frauen im öffentlichen Raum im Blick der Berliner Bahnhofsmission 1894–1939. Astrid Mignon Kirchhof. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag. 2011. Pp. 274. Cloth €52.00. ISBN 978-3-515-09776-5.

As thousands of young people streamed into Berlin to find work, opportunity, and adventure, new concerns arose about dangers awaiting them, especially the young women who could be drawn into prostitution. In her new monograph, Astrid Kirchhof studies an important Berlin institution for assisting these migrants, the Protestant Church's Berlin train station mission. Her research tackles fascinating contradictions in gender ideology. Mission volunteers bridged the spheres of *private* womanly care for others with their practical work in the very *public* train stations. The ability of elite women to exercise power and autonomy—and train station missionaries had connections with myriad other social service agencies—depended in part on the continuation of the old stories of the brutal dangers facing single woman alone in the big city. Many of the women who benefited most from the status opportunities available as the leaders of the Berlin train station mission could only rise in the organization as unpaid volunteers. The lower-middle-class mission volunteers as women in public were in part "desexualized," at the same time as their clients' sexual qualities (the risks of these migrant women becoming prostitutes) were exaggerated.

Kirchhof's examination of train station missions begins with a theoretical discussion of sociologist Martina Löw's concept of "*Raum*" (space) that brings together physical space with the complex social relations and the symbolic actions that take place in that space. In Löw's view space is a product; space is constructed and is produced through a process of constant conflicts over resources, status, and symbols. Kirchhof follows this theoretical introduction with a second chapter that persuasively describes the different constructions of the male and female internal migrants; females were the "endangered" women at risk of being tricked into prostitution versus the "wanderers/journeymen" males who legitimately sought work in the city because of the rural unemployment that they left behind. Three additional chapters cover the practical work of the train station missions, the connections between the train missions and other umbrella social service organizations, and finally the eventual demise of the missions in 1939 as a result of National Socialist opposition to core elements of the train station mission. In particular, National Socialist aims conflicted with the train station missionaries' Christian belief in serving all who required assistance. Kirchhof draws these conclusions on the basis of research in seven archives where she used publications, newspapers, pamphlets, and other primary sources such as personal letters and diaries.

Kirchhof's account includes details about everyday life at German train stations such as the ubiquitous presence of "*Automat*" machines in the Imperial period or the controversies over illuminated advertisements. This reader was struck by the practice of parents putting children as young as four years old on trains with signs around their necks noting their destinations and names. Then the train mission volunteers helped these children reach their final stops.

The real meat of the book, however, focuses on analyzing the diverse groups of women who served or were served by the train station missions. Kirchhof argues that mission workers benefited from the new (maneuvering) "space" [*Handlungsraum*] created through the organization, in part at the expense of the clients that they were trying to assist. These clients were constructed as women in need of protection and as gullible wide-eyed innocents in danger of being swallowed by Berlin. These constructions then had real impacts on poor migrants to Berlin whose freedom and opportunities were shaped by these popular perceptions (p. 51). Furthermore, the women that ended up resorting to prostitution, in many cases, had already worked as prostitutes elsewhere. The idea of the pure young maiden being tricked into prostitution, which shaped the train station missions, was mostly a myth.

Despite the detailed research and interesting arguments in this book, the sources often do not allow for an in-depth analysis of the experiences of the women involved in these missions, and instead the focus is on organizational developments. Kirchhof also does not have enough evidence from the sources to flesh out fully the claims that she makes derived from Löw's interpretations

of "space." In addition, Kirchhof could have done more to put her story of this organization in the larger context of the political, social, and cultural changes of the early twentieth century. Especially for the middle-class women of the type who staffed the train missions, the period between the 1890s and the 1930s saw new developments in gender ideologies, but a sense of that change was not included in this account. Instead Kirchhof's narrative moves back and forth between the 1890s, the years of World War I, and the early 1930s with a focus solidly on the women of train station missions.

Although additional contextual material would have enriched this study, this book still provides a welcome investigation of an important institution within the complex of Berlin social services. Kirchhof is closely attentive to the roles of class and status hierarchies and the way that these factors shaped women's potential autonomy. Kirchhof also provides evidence that adds to the existing scholarship that shows the limits of the ideology of "separate spheres." This book should be of interest to scholars of central European gender, urbanization, migration, philanthropy, and welfare institutions.

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The German League for the Prevention of Women's Emancipation: Antifeminism in Germany, 1912–1920. By Diane J. Guido. New York: Peter Lang. 2010. Pp. x + 217. Cloth $85.95. ISBN 978-1-4331-0784-9.

Since the 1970s, when a new generation of feminist scholars established women's history as an academic discipline, the history of feminist movements has received much attention. Historians have focused chiefly on the leaders, programs, and internal politics of these movements. An important but often neglected part of this story, however, is the historical context in which feminists lived and worked. In most periods, any individual or group who protested against women's subordination or advocated gender equality confronted militant and organized resistance to any challenge to male privilege. Historians who criticize feminists for positions that seem too cautious or conservative often fail to take into account the hostility that confronted even reasonable and moderate demands.

Diane Guido, now a vice president for undergraduate programs at Azusa Pacific University, explores one chapter in the long history of antifeminism in this account of the German League for the Prevention of Women's Emancipation (*Deutscher Bund zur Bekämpfung der Frauenemanzipation*). Founded in 1912,